First Find Christ.

Find work; but find thy Master first,
Or all thy toil may be accursed;
If thou would'st free thyself from doubt
Find God within, and work without.
That shall be worthy. Worship will
Be thine and calm thy spirit fill.

—CHURCHMAN.

Follow Me.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

Probably there is no other command given by Christ, which was more frequently repeated than the words "follow me." And how much they express. They embrace the whole duty of man toward his God. They give to us the divine assurance that while we are to follow, Christ has lead and is still leading the way. He never says go, but always come. "Come unto me" I will lead the way. When we go down into the valley, Christ has passed through before us. When we walk in the shadow, Christ is still there to comfort us. When the temptations of Vanity Fair assail us, he will strengthen us in the hour of trial and temptation. Nor does he leave us when we pass through the cold waters of the river; for has he not passed through for us and still sends his spirit to comfort us in the hour of death? Christ never leads us near the rocks that threatens destruction. He never leads us into the by-paths that lose us in the plains of despair or draw us into Doubting Castle. Oh no. When we find ourselves off the way and in danger of the adversary. It is our own waywardness that has drawn our eyes off our blessed leader, while we seek some other way to get into the fold but, even then we have the key of promise to obtain pardon and have Christ to set us upon the highway of God's truth once more.

We are much like the school boy who, when he is set a perfect copy by his teacher, tries to imitate it and in the flush of first few lines makes fair progress, but as the lines begin to fill the page, his eyes do not rise above his preceding efforts until he is only copying his own faults and adding others there to, so that his latter efforts are far short of his first.

It is sometimes the same with us in our Christian life. In the first flush of joy over our conversion, we look to Christ for our example; but as the days go by, we begin to look at our own work—congratulate ourselves upon its excellence and we gradually add fault after fault to our first imperfect copy untill we lose sight of Christ entirely and have nothing but the empty shell of form and tradition without the substance of the power of God unto salvation.

And now remember it is to you we are talking. Christ's commands are always personal and if you do not follow Christ, it is you who will have to suffer. "For how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him."

And our Lord is so explicit in his directions, "follow me." Take him at his word. Learn of him and wherever he leads, is the place for us to be. Whether by the running waters and green pastures of prosperity or among the bleak and barren hills of adversity.

And do not follow Christ through some poor, weak mortal. Christ wants nothing between you and him. There have been churches almost broken up, that have lost their power for good because some favorite minister has fallen under the assaults of the enemy. When these things occur, it looks as though, we only loved Christ because he had deigned to give a weak man a silver tongue, while we saw none of his great blessings that he is daily bestowing upon us. We must broaden our views, look more closely to the original copy.

Our way is not so rugged to us as it was to the original apostles and Christian martyrs. The giants of Pope and Pagan have long since lost their power to harm us. The lions have been removed from the pathway. Vanity Fair can no longer imprison and burn, other rough places are smoothed down; yet while this is so, Mr. Worldly Wiseman is just as persuasive and Mr. Morality gets many souls through him.

The apples of Beelzebub are more pleasant to the eye than ever; the arbors of rest are more apt to put us to sleep as the need of watching for the lion's lessons. Old Demas has more inducements for us than formerly. Formality and hypocrisy wear longer coats, look more sanctimonious than ever, but if we possess the breast plate of faith and use the sword of the spirit we will always be able to discern their wiles and put them to flight.

V. E. WAMPLER.

Bloomington, Ind.

Christ the Fountain.

BY E. J. PIRKEY.

"If any man thirst let him come to me and drink." Rev. 22:19

This was an astonishing announcement. If Plato had uttered it from his Academy, it would have savored of boastful presumption. Yet a Galilean peasant whose followers scarcely went beyond a dozen fishermen, makes this proclamation to all mankind. If any one is thirsty for pure happiness, I will satisty him; if any one is suffering from a sense of guilt, I will relieve him; if any one is heart-broken, I will comfort him.

But he is more than a miracle-worker, giving sight to the blind, ears to the deaf, and healing to the diseased. His great gift to man is himself From himself flows forth life. From the inexhaustible depths of his own being as very God of very God, a thirsty race may draw refreshment. "The water that I give shall be in you a well of water springing up into everlasting life." It is not simply profound truths that Jesus offers, or a system of doctrine or a beautiful model of right living, but he offers himself as living water for the soul.

God has put within man desires and demands that no uncertain thing can satisty. "My soul thirsts for the living Christ." When he opens the well-spring within his heart, peace flows like a river. This fountain never dries up; it is never frozen over; no sediment defiles it. Every good thing that is sought for outside of Jesus Christ has its defects and the very best has brought a shade of disappointment. Christ and his grace reaches every faculty and affection of the soul. Coleridge said that the best proof of the inspiration of God's word was that it is the only book in the world that finds me at every point of nature. The best argument for Jesus Christ is that he alone satisfies us. His grace goes to the right spot. His comfort soothes and his atoning blood makes us sure of pardon.

Mt. Olive, Va.

Comforts of Religion.

BY MRS. E. FOX.

There are many who have passed the age of youth and beauty, who have resigned the pleasures of that smiling season who begin to decline into the vale of years, unimpaired in their health, depressed in their fortunes, stripped of their friends, their children, and perhaps still more tender connections, what resources can this world afford them? It presents a dark and dreary waste through which there does not issue a single ray of comfort. Every delusive prospect of ambition is now at an end. Long experience of mankind, an experience very different from what the open and generous soul of youth fondly dreamed of, has rendered the heart almost inaccessible to new friendships. The principal sources of activity are taken away when those for whom we labor are cut off from us, those who animated and those who sweetened all the toils of life. Where then can the soul find refuge but in the bosom of religion? There the soul finds relief from the troubles of life. Without it we would be sinful beyond the bounds of human aid. I speak here of such as retain the feelings of humanity, whose misfortunes have softened and perhaps rendered more delicately sensible, not those who have never tasted of that bitter cup of sorrow, who know not the heart pangs of parting with those that are near and dear to them, until the silent messenger visits our homes can we sympathize with those that mourn.

I believe there are times when the vilest sinner feels a something within that they have a desire beyond what they are now doing a longing for something better, but still they go on in sin; they do not heed their conscience, but put it off for a season. If they would but hearken to that still, small voice, Oh, what a happy change there would be. They would look back and shudder at the past, and wonder why they could not see a beauty in religion before. We know by experience that there is beauty in religion. We feel more love toard all mankind, toward everything, then let love dwell in us for "God is love."

Pleasant Hill, O.

Christian Communion.

A Christian is one whose inward and outward life is conformed to the doctrine of Christ. In Scripture he is termed a disciple of Christ; one who obeys from the heart that form of doctrine delivered by Christ. Hence a follower of Christ, having been properly inducted into the visible church or kingdom of Jesus Christ according to the law of induction by faith, repentance and Gospel baptism, having been made partaker of the benefits of a purchased salvation through the sufferings and death of the anointed. He is made partaker of the Holy Spirit, and through his divine influence is willing to attend upon all the means of grace that the good Father has revealed from heaven through his Son. These are plainly set forth in the Gospel, of which the communion is one. All who have been baptized by one spirit into one body can partake together as one body. "Christ is the head." As one family "Christ is the elder brother" and "All speaking the same things," (by practice as well as words) "All walking by the same rule,"—Gospel rule.

In short, all who live out the doctrine and principles of their adopted creed can enjoy communion together. The term communion partakes of the same elements as the term union. In communion there must be agreement and concord. In fact there cannot be Christian communion unless there be first Christian union. Commuion signifies union. Light and darkness have no communion with each other, because they have no union. They cannot be united, there is no agreement, or concord. Just so in all different organizations. If there is concord, or agreement there is but one body. But on account of many different creeds, constitutions, catechisms and confessions of faith, there exists discord, disagreement and disunion; and as a consequence there cannot be Christian communion between them. The best that could be said would be inter-communion. But as the holy emblems represent one bread and one body, and the Apostle terms the holy service the communion of the body, (not bodies) of Christ; so brethren let us all speak the same things, and walk by the same rule; and grant all others the privilege to live out the principles of their creeds as long as we cannot persuade them to accept our adopted creed, the Gospel alone.

Written in love for the cause of Christ.

J. M. WAMPLER.

Blanco, Pa.

A Question Answered.

In Math. 12:5, we read: "Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath day the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?" In our Bible class the question was asked how the priests could profane Sabbaths, and still be blameless. We could not answer. Will you please answer for the benefit of us and others? J. G. W.

The laws of nature are supreme, and where the law of ceremony comes in conflict with such a law, the latter becomes powerless. The fact that David was hungry and needed nourishment excused him from the censure of the law. The priests profaned the Sabbath and were blameless, because a necessary work was performed.

It was contrary to the law to bear burdens and to build fires. Yet if a sick priest required a fire to be built for medical purposes, a fellow priest could build a fire and was blameless; or if a fellow priests would have fallen dead at the altar with heart disease, an associate would have been blameless who took hold of him and carried him to some couch; yet he would have profaned the Sabbath. So there were hundreds of similar circumstances possible where the priests could profane the Sabbath and be blameless, especially in cases of sickness, accidents and sudden death.